

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the due consideration given the application. This amendment is being filed concurrently with a Request for Continued Examination.

Claims 48, 49, and 52-56 are pending in the application. Claims 57 and 58 are been canceled by this amendment without prejudice or disclaimer. The amendments to the claims, particularly the last paragraph of claim 48, find support in the specification at page 15, line 20 to page 16, line 22 and in Figures 2A, 5 and 6.

No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this amendment.

Claim Objections

Claims 48 and 52-58 have been objected to as containing informalities.

The comments in the Office Action regarding the term "solvent" have been considered and the claims have been appropriately amended.

Rejection Under 35 USC §112, Second Paragraph

Claims 55, 56 and 58 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that the term "said surface" in claim 56 is confusing. However, claim 56 has been amended to recite "said protrusions", which is clear in light of the instant claims.

The Office Action asserts that the recitation of "gravitational direction" in claim 55 is indefinite. However, claim 55 has been amended to remove this recitation.

The claims are thus clear, definite and have full antecedent basis.

This rejection is believed to be overcome, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 USC §112, First Paragraph

Claims 48 and 52-58 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, as not complying with the written description requirement.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that the specification is enabling for a gutter directly attached to a vapor condenser's structure, but not enabled for all condensing or recovery mechanisms. However, the claims have been amended to recite a gutter in base claim 48.

In regard to claim 56, the Office Action asserts that this claim lacks context regarding the surface. However, claim 56 has been amended to recite protrusions and not a surface.

Any issues regarding claims 57 and 58 are moot in light of the cancellation of these claims.

The instant claims are thus supported by the specification.

This rejection is believed to be overcome, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Art Rejections

Claims 48 and 54 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by REZNIK (U.S. Patent 4,694,586).

Claims 52 and 55-58 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over REZNIK.

Claims 48, 49, and 52-55 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by SURPRENANT (U.S. Patent 3,595,205).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The present invention pertains to a method for condensing and recovering a solvent from a coating layer which is formed by applying a coating solution containing solvent to a moving web, which is exemplarily illustrated in Figures 2A, 5 and 6 of the application, which are reproduced below.

FIG.2A

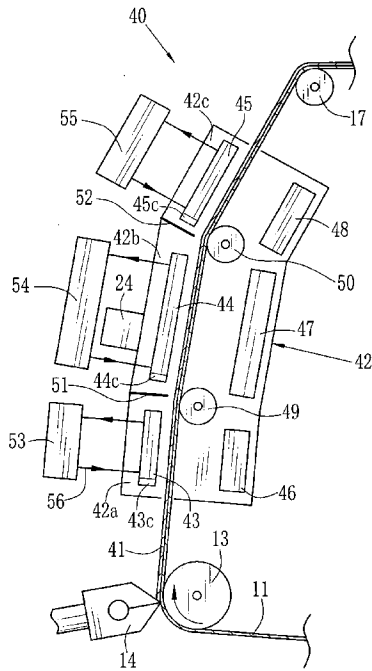


FIG.5

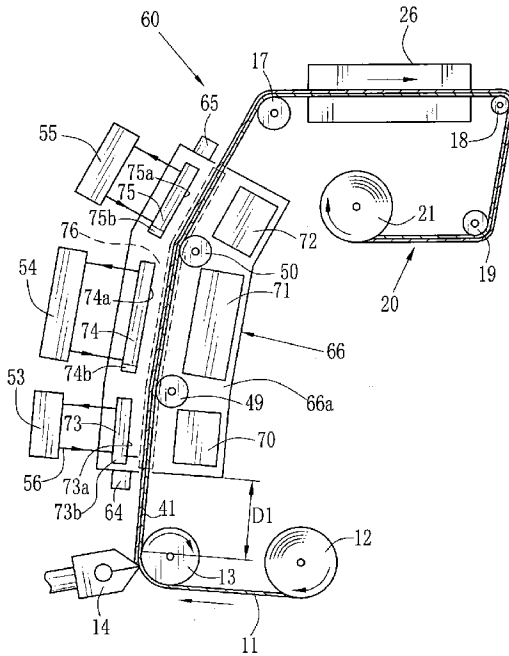
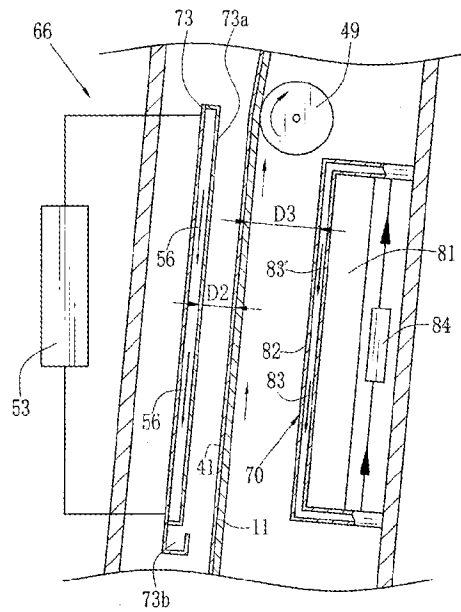


FIG.6



As is discussed on page 12 of the specification, when the transporting angle is less than 60° , the speed at which the

solvent vapor flows down by its own weight becomes smaller and the solvent vapor easily escapes from the side of the coating layer, which makes it difficult to keep the solvent vapor concentration close to the coating layer high, resulting in the drying unevenness.

Therefore, in the present invention, the web is transported at the angle from 60° to 90° as claimed (see independent claim 48), and the coating surface is directed upward to keep the solvent vapor concentration close to the coating layer high (see the paragraph bridging pages 4 and 5).

Furthermore, by placing the gutter in parallel with the transporting direction of the web, the disturbance of the wind near the coating surface, and so the drying unevenness, can be prevented.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references teaches or suggests the claimed features and the advantages discussed above.

For Example, the Office Action refers to Figures 1, 2 and 6 of REZNIK, which are reproduced below.

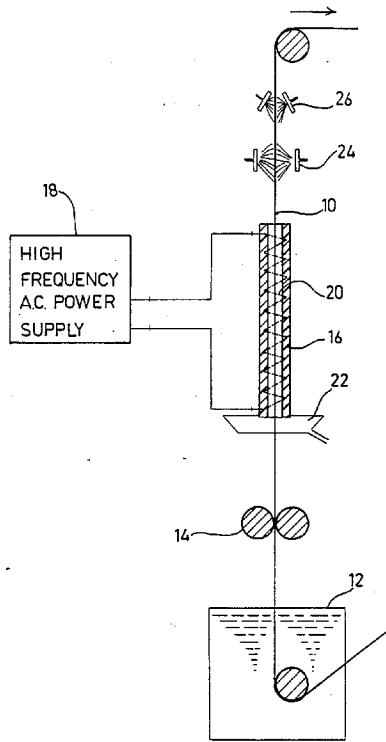


FIG 1

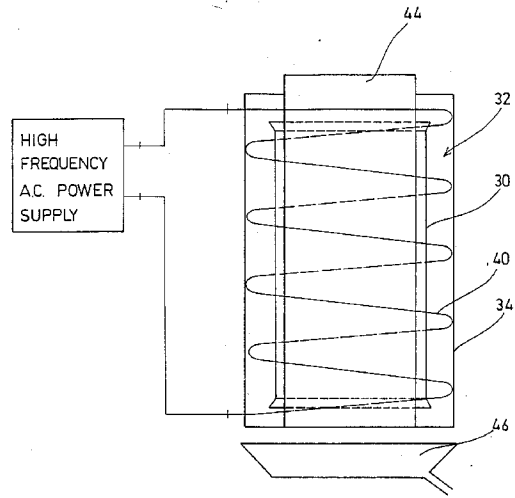


FIG 2

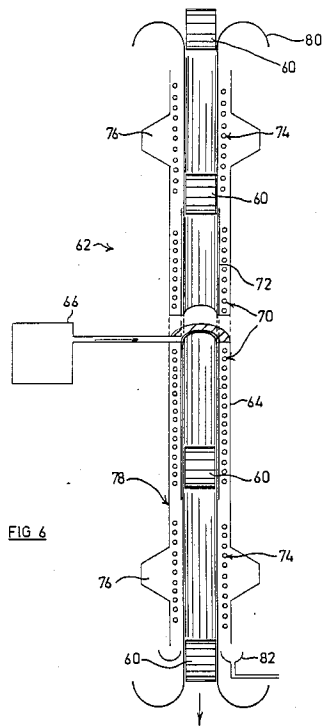
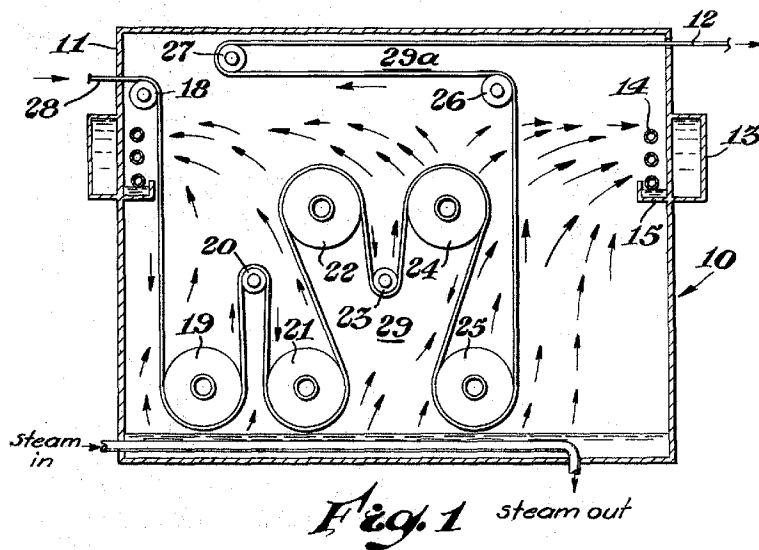


FIG 6

However, there is no teaching or inference in REZNIK of transporting the moving web at an angle from 60° to 90°, protrusions and grooves formed on a condensing surface, and a gutter, such as is set forth in claim 48 of the present invention.

REZNIK thus does not anticipate or render *prima facie* unpatentable a claimed embodiment of the present invention.

The Office Action refers to Figure 1 of SURPRENANT, which is reproduced below.



However, there is no teaching or inference in SURPRENANT of transporting the moving web at an angle from 60° to 90°, protrusions and grooves formed on a condensing surface, and a gutter, such as is set forth in claim 48 of the present invention.

Moreover, at page 10 the Office Action asserts:

Applicants allege that their claims differ from Surprenant because "a surfaces of the condensing member and the recovery member face a surfaces of the coating layer", but this condition is true for every single illustrated figure in this reference, because all sides of the substrates in this reference may be considered to include coating layer thereon, since the entire substrate is impregnated, thus all surfaces may be considered coated; and there is always some surface of the substrate facing some surface of both the condenser structure & the collection structure. Applicant had made their claims so broad & generic as to read on such an almost infinite variety of structures, thus their arguments for differentiation completely lack any basis in their claims.

However, instant claim 48 now recites: "at least one condenser being arranged to such that a condensing surface of the at least one condenser faces a surface of said coating layer having been formed on said web."

The present invention is thus clearly different from SURPRENANT.

SURPRENANT thus does not anticipate a claimed embodiment of the present invention.

These rejections are believed to be overcome, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

It is believed that the rejections have been overcome, obviated or rendered moot, and no issues remain. The Examiner is

accordingly respectfully requested to place the application in condition for allowance and to issue a Notice of Allowability.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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